

# LECTURES ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF ISLAM

A SELF-STUDY GUIDE

BILL WARNER, PHD

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This book is dedicated to the  
millions of victims of jihad over the last 1400 years.  
May you read this and become a voice for the voiceless.

## PREFACE

### THE CSPI TEACHING METHOD

The Center for the Study of Political Islam, CSPI, teaching method is the easiest and quickest way to learn about Islam.

#### *Authoritative*

There are only two ultimate authorities about Islam—Allah and Mohammed. All of the curriculum in the CSPI method is from the Koran and the Sunna (the words and deeds of Mohammed). The knowledge you get in CSPI is powerful, authoritative and irrefutable. You learn the facts about the ideology of Islam from its ultimate sources.

#### *Story-telling*

Facts are hard to remember, stories are easy to remember. The most important story in Islam is the life of Mohammed. Once you know the story of Mohammed, all of Islam is easy to understand.

#### *Systemic Knowledge*

The easiest way to study Islam is to first see the whole picture. The perfect example of this is the Koran. The Koran alone cannot be understood, but when the life of Mohammed is added, the Koran is straight forward.

There is no way to understand Islam one idea at the time, because there is no context. Context, like story-telling, makes the facts and ideas simple to understand. The best analogy is that when the jig saw puzzle is assembled, the image on the puzzle is easy to see. But looking at the various pieces, it is difficult to see the picture.

#### *Levels of Learning*

The ideas of Islam are very foreign to our civilization. It takes repetition to grasp the new ideas. The CSPI method uses four levels of training to teach the doctrine in depth. The first level is designed for a beginner. Each level repeats the basics for in depth learning.

When you finish the first level you will have seen the entire scope of Islam. The in depth knowledge will come from the next levels.

### *Political Islam, Not Religious Islam*

Islam has a political doctrine and a religious doctrine. Its political doctrine is of concern for everyone, while religious Islam is of concern only for Muslims.

### *Books Designed for Learning*

Each CSPI book fits into a teaching system. Most of the paragraphs have an index number which means that you can confirm for yourself how factual the books are by verifying from the original source texts.

#### LEVEL 1

##### INTRODUCTION TO THE TRILOGY AND SHARIA

*The Life of Mohammed, The Hadith, Lectures on the Foundations of Islam, The Two Hour Koran, Sharia Law for Non-Muslims, Self Study on Political Islam, Level 1*

#### LEVEL 2

##### APPLIED DOCTRINE, SPECIAL TOPICS

*The Doctrine of Women, The Doctrine of Christians and Jews, The Doctrine of Slavery, Self-Study on Political Islam, Level 2, Psychology of the Muslim, Factual Persuasion*

#### LEVEL 3

##### INTERMEDIATE TRILOGY AND SHARIA

*Mohammed and the Unbelievers, Political Traditions of Mohammed, Simple Koran, Self-Study of Political Islam, Level 3, Sources of the Koran, selected topics from Reliance of the Traveller*

#### LEVEL 4

##### ORIGINAL SOURCE TEXTS

*The Life of Muhammed, Guillaume; any Koran, Sahih Bukhari, selected topics, Mohammed and Charlemagne Revisited, Scott.*

With the completion of Level 4 you are prepared to read both popular and academic texts.



# INTRODUCTION

## LECTURE ONE

This book is a transcript of a series of lectures that guide a student in the study of the three books that are the foundation of political Islam.

Welcome to a course that is based on five lectures that introduce a beginning student to the entirety of Islamic doctrine. Up until now the study of Islamic doctrine has been by Arab language scholars, historians, theologians and students of Middle East culture. Critical thought has been used, but there has never been a fully scientific approach to Islamic doctrine.

This lecture is the first part of a training that will explain Islam based on its foundational doctrine. The course will cover three books – The Koran and two books about Mohammed, his biography (the Sira) and his traditions (the Hadith).

There have been two things that you have been told about Islam that are not true. The first is that it is only a religion. This is the most common misconception. Generally speaking, those who maintain that Islam is a religion are non-Muslims, because most Muslims insist on the fact that Islam is a complete philosophy, a complete way of life that includes religion but also politics, culture and everything else it takes to run a civilization.

The second falsehood is that Islam is nearly impossible to understand or at the very least that it takes a great deal of lengthy study in school, preferably college.

The other thing that makes it difficult for a person to learn about Islam is that they've heard so many contradictory things that Islam seems very confusing. On the one hand, there are very nice Muslims whom people have met and as a result you would think that these nice folks must reflect the true nature of Islam. But on the other hand, we keep seeing actions by other Muslims that involve riots, assassinations and beheadings and these people claim to be Muslim as well. So which is it?

## THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD

These lectures are different, as they are scientific in nature. This scientific approach brings us assured results that go beyond opinion, because if we're going to speak about Islam we need to have more than opinion. We

have enough of that already. We need a fact-based approach, something that makes sense and is coherent.

We also need an explanation that is systematic and shows us the entire story of Islam in a straightforward manner. This course will meet all of these criteria.

The course covers five areas—

1. A general overview of how a scientific approach is possible.
2. An introduction to the Sira, the biography of Mohammed.
3. An introduction to the Hadith, the traditions of Mohammed.
4. How to read the Koran.
5. How to use this knowledge about Islamic doctrine.

If we try to sort out the different opinions about Islam, and we look to a professional or an expert, exactly which expert do we turn to? If we're going to ask a Muslim, do we ask someone who is nice or do we ask a jihadist, because both of them claim to be Muslims? Do we ask a college professor, someone in the media, a Muslim at work or do we go to the internet? Because when we go to the internet there is a riot of opinions on Islam. So how do you sort it out? Where do we find factual information?

The study of Islam is also obscured by political correctness. Criticism of Islam is frequently called bigotry because anything that is said that offends Muslims is considered racism or bigotry. This political correctness shuts off any real debate because if someone says something that a Muslim finds offensive then how are we ever to discuss anything that is negative about Islam? There are negative aspects to all thought systems and all philosophies. We have to be able to move beyond the fact that critical thought is called bigoted thought.

There's an oddity here. Those who claim that any criticism about Islam is invalid do so by using a moral argument, not a factual argument. The argument is that if you disagree with the standard media version of Islam, then you are a bigot, suggesting that you are an immoral person, which is name-calling. We're not going to be using feelings and name-calling in this curriculum. What we're going to do is use actual, textual facts, so that we're beyond opinion.

At the end of this course, you will be able to understand that most mysterious of all books, the Koran. We're going to determine how to get an answer to the question: what is the true nature of Islam? We will not find out the true nature of Islam by media comments or other informal methods.

We're going to have to find a way to discuss Islam that is fact-based, scientific and provable, one that goes beyond opinion. If something is objective



or scientific, it means that no matter who does the work, they will come up with the same results. If we want to do a small science experiment to find out how long it takes a ball to fall from the edge of a roof, for example, no matter who does the work, if they follow good experimental procedures they're going to come up with the same answer. In the same way, we must have an objective way to study Islam in which everybody gets the same answer.

This scientific approach is going to make Islam quite easy to understand and will include all of Islam. One of the reasons that you're confused now about the true nature of Islam is that you've not been given the whole picture. Imagine that we have a jigsaw puzzle and all the pieces are loose and in a box. If you wanted to know what the picture was hidden in the jigsaw puzzle, one way to do it, although it doesn't work, would be to look at one piece of the puzzle and try to figure out what is on it. Well, we can pick up all the pieces of the puzzle and perhaps gain some insight as to what one or another piece might be, but the only way to understand the whole jigsaw puzzle is to put it together and look at the complete picture.

Using the scientific approach is going to let us be absolutely authoritative. We're going to be able to state things about Islam and we're going to know that we are right, that this is not just an opinion, but that it has substance to it and facts behind it.

#### THE STARTING POINT

If we're going to have a scientific analysis of Islam, we have to have a foundation that is unassailable, because if we start off from a questionable assumption everything after that can be challenged.

There is a place in the study of Islam that is absolutely sure and certain. There's a point at which we can start, that every Muslim from the past, the present and the future all agree on without a single exception. That is the statement:

*There is no god but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet.*

This declaration of Mohammed and Allah, if said in Arabic in front of witnesses, means that you are now a practicing Muslim. But, this statement about Mohammed and Allah is not just the beginning of Islam but also the very foundation and even the totality of Islam.

How can such a small statement contain all of Islam? It talks about Mohammed and about Allah. And it turns out that all of Islam, without any exception, is based upon Allah and Mohammed.

There is no god but Allah. Now where will we learn about Allah? Well, that would all come from the Koran, which seems a difficult place to start because the Koran seems to be so little understood. But as we will see, the Koran can actually be quite easily understood and we can understand the true nature of Allah after we know who Mohammed is.

#### THE TWO KORANS

Let's take a look at the Koran. Frequently, it is a big thick green book that contains both English and Arabic. When we try to read it, it's quite puzzling. First off, there doesn't seem to be any time in the Koran. When we turn a page we don't go forward in time, we could go backwards or perhaps we're not even sure if time has moved at all. It also seems chaotic. One subject follows another in seemingly random fashion.

Then we come to contradictions. We'll read one verse in the Koran which seems quite good:

*Koran 109:6 You shall have your religion and I shall have my religion.*

But there are other passages in the Koran which are very violent: cutting off hands and feet, crucifixions, and torture:

*Koran 9:5 When the sacred months are over slay the idolaters wherever you find them. Arrest them, besiege them, and lie in ambush everywhere for them. If they repent and take to prayer and render the alms levy, allow them to go their way. God is forgiving and merciful.*

This violent material contained within the Koran produces a contradiction. Is the Koran about good or is the Koran about violence?

There are actually two different Korans in the same book. There is an early Koran from Mecca and a later Koran from Medina. And those two contrast greatly, and frequently they contradict each other. The first Koran, written in Mecca, is quite religious and the second, or later Koran written in Medina, is very political. There's such a strong contrast between them that we're left with an uncertainty of what the Koran's true nature is. But everything that appears to be a contradiction is actually a key to understanding the true nature of Islam.

Another confusing aspect about the Koran is that there doesn't seem to be enough information in it. Most people have heard of the Five Pillars of Islam: the declaration of Allah and Mohammed, the charity tax, fasting during Ramadan, the pilgrimage to Mecca and praying five times a day.

But when you read the Koran carefully, none of these five pillars is explained and yet every Muslim seems to know how to do them. How is

this? We will see that there's a big piece missing from the Koran, and that missing piece is Mohammed.

The other thing that's strange about the Koran is that there's hardly anyone who would say they understand it. Yet we have stories from Mohammed's day and we find that illiterate Arabs frequently had discussions and arguments over the content of the Koran. How could it be that these men so readily understood the Koran and yet when we read the Koran today, we come away very puzzled? This is an important clue because it's going to show us that there is a way of organizing the Koran which makes it readable and understandable.

Briefly, again this will be covered more later, the way the Koran can be made readable is to reintroduce time into the Koran, to rearrange the chapters in chronological order, because the original Koran was laid out over a period of time and the Koran that you buy in the bookstore does not reflect this.

#### PUTTING MOHAMMED BACK INTO THE KORAN

It turns out that scholars since the days of Mohammed have known the proper order of the chapters in the Koran. So the first step towards understanding the Koran and making it readable is simply to put everything in the right time order. The other important step is to group similar topics together. For instance the story of Moses occurs again and again. And if we group all those stories about Moses together they become quite easy to understand.

But the main technique that makes the Koran readable is to bring Mohammed into the picture. Now this is not a novel suggestion. Any book written by Muslim scholars that is about the interpretation of the Koran always brings Mohammed into the picture. Mohammed gives us the context that we need to understand the Koran.

When we put the chapters in the right time order, group similar topics and then introduce Mohammed, we wind up with an epic story. It starts off with a hymn to God and ends in political triumph over all peoples.

The importance of Mohammed is clearly given to us in the Koran itself. There are over 90 verses which say Mohammed is the perfect Muslim. Every Muslim is to imitate Mohammed in every way and in every detail of his life. It goes on further to say that those who do not imitate Mohammed will go to hell. So Mohammed is the key to understanding the Koran and Islam.

We know a great deal about Mohammed because there are two books that give us all the information about him. The first is a book called the Sira.

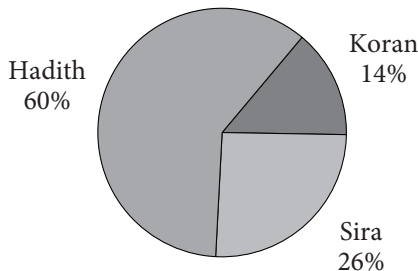
The word Sira just means biography. Usually when it's a capital "S," it refers to the biography of Mohammed. We have an extensive biography of Mohammed which runs about 800 pages in fine print. We know an enormous amount about his life.

The second book is comprised of the Hadith, little traditions, little stories, about Mohammed. The shortest tradition is three words – "War is deceit." But there are other traditions telling us what Mohammed did, how he drank a glass of water, how he put on his shoes, or what judgment he gave about a certain person.

So we have two sets of texts that give us Mohammed: the Sira and the Hadith.

It's very instructive to stop and take a look at how much information is in the Sira and the Hadith and compare it with what is found in the Koran. Most people believe that Islam is found only in the Koran but this simply is not true.

FIGURE 1-1: THE RELATIVE SIZES OF THE TRILOGY TEXTS



The Hadith and the Sira (collectively referred to as "Sunna," the words and deeds of Mohammed) comprise 86% (60% + 26%) of the textual doctrine of Islam. That means that the Koran is only 14% of the textual doctrine. The Trilogy of the Koran, Sira and Hadith forms the true Islamic bible. The Koran is not nearly complete enough on its own to call it the Islamic bible, or the foundation of Islam.

We can now define Islam as the doctrine found in the Koran, the Sira and the Hadith. Islam is 86% Mohammed and 14% Allah. Now we have defined exactly what Islam is. If it is in the Trilogy, then it is Islam and if it is not found in the Trilogy, then it is not Islam.

There's nothing outside of the Koran, Sira, and Hadith that we need to know. We have circumscribed the doctrine. It's almost like the first pictures of the earth that came back from orbit. For the first time, we could see the entirety of the earth. It was no longer possible to pretend or imagine that there were secret places, hidden islands or areas, on earth. There it was, all laid out completely before us. And in the same way, once we understand the Koran, Sira and Hadith, we understand the entirety of Islam.

#### THE KAFIR

When we read the Koran, the Sira and Hadith, there's a new word that we run into: Kafir. Now a Kafir is a non-Muslim, but the Koran, Sira and Hadith functionally flesh out and define what this word Kafir means, because as we will see, the word Kafir is not at all neutral. Indeed it is the most negative and reviled word in any language.

Here are a few of the Koran references:

A Kafir can be mocked—

*Koran 83:34 On that day the faithful will mock the Kafirs, while they sit on bridal couches and watch them. Should not the Kafirs be paid back for what they did?*

A Kafir can be beheaded—

*Koran 47:4 When you encounter the Kafirs on the battlefield, cut off their heads until you have thoroughly defeated them and then take the prisoners and tie them up firmly.*

A Kafir can be plotted against—

*Koran 86:15 They plot and scheme against you [Mohammed], and I plot and scheme against them. Therefore, deal calmly with the Kafirs and leave them alone for a while.*

A Kafir can be terrorized—

*Koran 8:12 Then your Lord spoke to His angels and said, "I will be with you. Give strength to the believers. I will send terror into the Kafirs' hearts, cut off their heads and even the tips of their fingers!"*

A Muslim is not the friend of a Kafir—

*Koran 3:28 Believers should not take Kafirs as friends in preference to other believers. Those who do this will have none of Allah's protection and will only have themselves as guards. Allah warns you to fear Him for all will return to Him.*

A Kafir is evil—

Koran 23:97 *And say: Oh my Lord! I seek refuge with You from the suggestions of the evil ones [Kafirs]. And I seek refuge with you, my Lord, from their presence.*

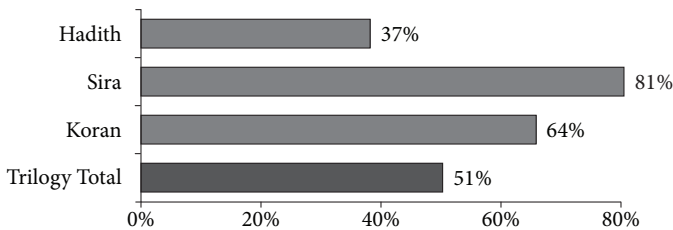
A Kafir should be disgraced—

Koran 37:18 *Tell them, “Yes! And you [Kafirs] will be disgraced.”*

A Kafir is cursed—

Koran 33:61 *They [Kafirs] will be cursed, and wherever they are found, they will be seized and murdered. It was Allah’s same practice with those who came before them, and you will find no change in Allah’s ways.*

FIGURE 1-2: THE AMOUNT OF TEXT DEVOTED TO KAFIR



If we pull out every verse in the Koran that has to do with non-Muslims, Kafirs, we find this comprises an astounding 64% of the Koran. Well, this is rather startling because we would think, given no other information, that the Koran would be primarily about how to be a Muslim, but we discover that nearly two-thirds of the Koran is about non-Muslims—Kafirs.

But the figures become even more amazing when we turn to the Sira, the life of Mohammed. Eighty-one percent of the text of Mohammed’s life is devoted to Kafirs. Even in the Hadith, the traditions of Mohammed, we find that 37% of the traditions are about non-Muslims, who they are and what to do to them.

Taken as a whole, the Trilogy, or the Koran, Sira and Hadith, devote most of its information to the Kafir, the nonbeliever.

#### THE FOUNDATIONALIST POINT OF VIEW

The actions and words of Muslims have their foundation in the doctrine of Islam found in the Islamic Trilogy of the Koran, Sira and Hadith. This doctrine must be analyzed and understood on a rational basis and on its own merits. When you know the foundational doctrine of Islam, then you can understand every action by Muslims, and reasonably predict future behavior.

The Foundationalist school is fact-based and scientific. It posits a cause and effect relationship between Islamic doctrine and the behavior and speech of Muslims. If an opinion or comment about Islam does not have a reference, or a possible reference, to the Trilogy, then the opinion has little merit.

The Foundationalist school sees Islamic history as being the fruit of its doctrine. Since both past and present Islam are based upon the same unchanging doctrine, it is possible to understand from the actions of Muslims today what the future will bring.

#### CONTEXT

Now let's stop and take a look at what we've done here. For one thing, we have looked at the complete, entire picture. When we look at Kafirs in the Koran, Sira and Hadith, we are examining the complete doctrine of Islam. And our use of percentages means that we have looked at the whole context, because one of the excuses given when people talk about information that might show Islam in a bad light is, "Oh well, it depends on the context." But our context here is the complete, total doctrine. There's nothing left out, so there's no way to argue, "Well, you've taken it out of context."

It also means that there's no place left to look inside of Islam. There are no more little secret pockets of information that might offset an argument. Using the entirety of the Koran, Sira, and Hadith means that we can get away from a fantasy that somewhere else there is information that will make Islam better.

We have defined political Islam. The Kafir is completely outside of Islamic religious doctrine. The Koran makes this exceedingly clear. So since the Kafir is outside of Islam, any doctrine which has to do with Kafirs is a political doctrine, NOT a religious doctrine.

We now also can state that there is a Kafir-centric point of view with regards to Islam. The Koran, Sira and Hadith consider the Kafir to be the worst of all possible people. And yet as Kafirs we say, "No, that's not true. We Kafirs can be good and moral people and we want to examine Islam not from the standpoint of the believer but from the way that Islam views us."

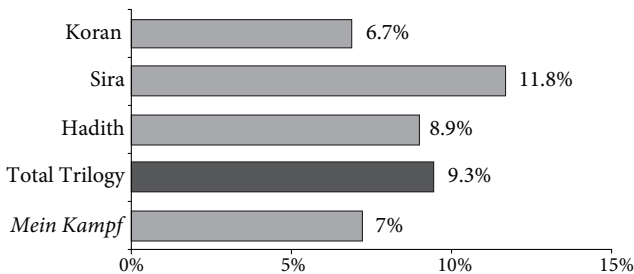
We have a foundational view. The statements being made here about Kafirs are based on the foundational doctrine of Islam. It is the literal basis of Islam.

One of the things, by the way, that we see in examining all three texts: the Koran, Sira, and Hadith, is that Islam is always on the attack about the Kafir, either psychologically or physically.

#### THE JEWS

Now let's take a look at another very large subject found within the Trilogy of Islam, and that is the story of the Jews. In the beginning, in Mecca, Mohammed was quite kind to the Jews and indeed viewed himself as the final Jewish prophet. But later in Medina, we discover a horror. In three years, the three Jewish tribes that had comprised about half the population in Medina had been annihilated.

FIGURE 1-3: ANTI-JEWISH TEXT IN THE TRILOGY



The Jews are so important that they comprise 12% of the biography of Mohammed and 9% of the doctrine found in the Hadith.

Nearly 7% of the Koran devotes itself to negative statements about the Jews. The Sira, the biography of Mohammed, devotes 12% of its text to hating the Jews. And nearly 9% of all the Hadith or traditions are about Jewish hatred.

Taken as a whole, the Trilogy devotes over 9% of its text to Jewish hatred, while Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, the gold standard of Jewish hatred, devotes only 7% of its text to the hatred of Jews.

Let's examine an historical event involving Mohammed and the Jews. Mohammed attacked and captured an entire tribe, the last tribe of Jews actually left in Medina. The children were adopted into Muslim families to be raised as Muslims. The women were sold into slavery. And 800 male Jews had their heads removed and the bodies buried in a mass grave as Mohammed sat there and watched beside his now 12-year-old bride. How do we view this?



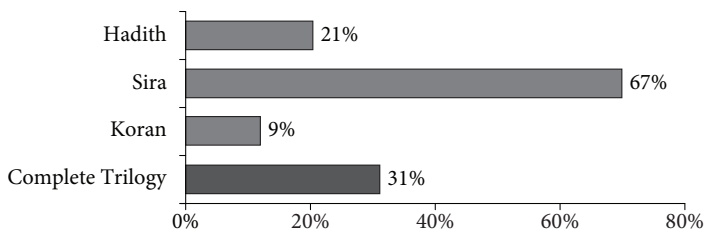
- The view of Islam is that this was a day of complete and absolute triumph over the hated enemy of Mohammed, the Jews.
- Another view is that of the Kafir, the nonbeliever. And from this viewpoint the Jews were victims of a mass execution that was an ethnic cleansing, a war crime and an act of evil.
- But there is a third viewpoint, that of the apologist. The apologist does not believe that Mohammed is the prophet of Allah, but is unwilling to say anything that would offend Islam. We find this viewpoint very prevalent in the universities, the government and the media. The execution of the 800 male Jews is something that happened in history but worse things have happened, says the apologist. That was then and this is now. Besides, haven't the Christians done worse things than this? So let's just overlook this matter.

These lectures on the foundations of Islam view Islam from the standpoint of the Kafir; these views are Kafir-centric. It's important to realize that the view of the Muslim, the apologist and the Kafir will never align. So when people come together for bridge building or other such multicultural events, it is not possible to align the Kafir's viewpoint with that of the Muslim. The reason is this: Islam is against the Kafir and takes every opportunity to hurt the Kafir. So therefore the Kafir is the victim. The Kafir-centric view is the victim's view of Islam.

## JIHAD

Now let's apply statistical analysis to the text about the subject of jihad. There's a great deal of the Trilogy that is devoted to jihad. From the chart below we see that 31% of the Trilogy is about jihad. That is not a verse or two, but a major theme of Islam.

FIGURE 1-4: AMOUNT OF TRILOGY TEXT DEVOTED TO JIHAD



Now we need to examine what jihad means as found in all three texts. Jihad does not mean war, but struggle. The proper term for war is *harb*. There are two kinds of jihad. There is the inner struggle jihad, such as trying

to curb your temper or maybe trying to stop smoking cigarettes. Then we have the outer jihad, the jihad of war.

Now which jihad is most important? Well, let's use our statistical method to analyze that. The Hadith, as we said before, devotes 21% of its text to jihad. Let's look through that 21% and see what we find. About 2% of the traditions relate to jihad as inner struggle. About 98% are about jihad as harming Kafirs, jihad as war.

So is jihad the inner struggle? Well, the answer is yes, 2%. Is jihad killing Kafirs? The answer is yes, 98%. Do you see the power here of this statistical method? It resolves the question about the true nature of jihad.

But jihad is not just war. The Koran, then the Hadith, tell us more about how jihad can be waged against the Kafir. It can be waged by the sword, violence. It can be waged by the mouth, that is arguments and persuasion. It can be waged by writing. But jihad can also be waged with money – cash. Indeed the Koran emphasizes this point to such a degree that donating money to jihad is equivalent to actually fighting jihad.

Jihad, as we find in the Sira, is actually civilizational war. The reason for this is simple. Islam is a complete civilization. For everything that we do inside of Kafir civilization, Islam has its own version. So the purpose of jihad is to replace every single element of a civilization with an Islamic element. That is why when we look at countries where Islam has entered, we see that Islam has completely taken over. For example, Turkey, which used to be Greek and Christian, is now 99.7% Muslim. In jihad, every Christian will have to be replaced by a Muslim. Jihad is total. Every single aspect of the civilization has to be replaced – places, names, food, dress – everything must become Islamic. And since Islam is a total civilization, jihad is the elimination by annihilation of a civilization. Jihad is not just military war but true civilizational war.

#### DUALISM AND SUBMISSION

It's time now to look at the two fundamental principles that underlie all of Islamic doctrine. Once you understand these two principles you will really understand Islam and you will certainly stop being confused about its true nature.

Let's look at the contradictory nature of the Koran, the Sira and the Hadith.

In the early part of the Koran, Jews are looked upon quite favorably and indeed Mohammed portrays himself as the culmination of the Jewish prophets. But then in the latter part of the Koran written in Medina, it becomes filled with violent Jewish hatred. Now which is it? Is the Koran

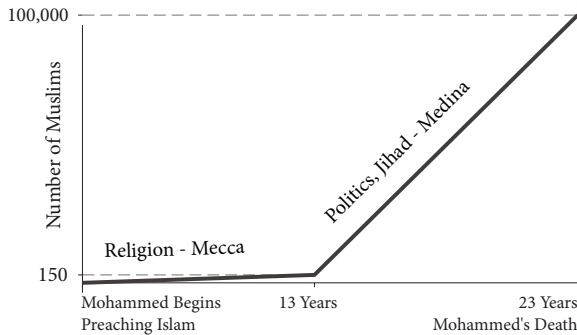
favorable to the Jews or is it simply filled with Jewish hatred? This is a major contradiction.

Let's move to another example. In Mecca, when Mohammed first started preaching the religion of Islam, there is no mention of jihad, none at all. Yet when we come to Medina, the Koran is filled with mentions of jihad, violence, use of the sword, decapitations and those kinds of things.

So what is the true nature of the Koran? Is it peaceful as in Mecca or violent as in Medina?

Then we have the nature of Mohammed, the man himself. In Mecca he preached the religion of Islam. He did not get many people to follow him. Over a 13-year period he only persuaded about 150 people to become Muslims.

FIGURE 1-5: GROWTH OF ISLAM



Then in Medina he changed. Instead of just being a preacher, he took on the additional roles of warrior and politician. He was no longer just preaching to people but sending out armed men against those who opposed him.

Mohammed changed and the results changed. For the last nine years of his life, Mohammed was involved in an act of jihadic violence on the average of every six weeks. As a result, Islam prospered and roughly 10,000 people a year became Muslims.

So we have two very different Mohammeds. He was both a peaceful, religious man and a massively violent warrior. What is his true nature?

When we read the Koran, early verses read like a peaceful religion. But then when we come to Medina we have verses promoting be-headings, the cutting off of hands and feet on opposite sides and crucifixions. In the end the Koran becomes a document of political triumph. So which is the real Koran? Is it a peaceful, religious Koran or the violent Koran of jihad?

The problem here is that the Koran is the perfect word of the only god of the universe; hence everything in it has to be precisely true. The early verses of peace and tolerance are true. The later verses that invoke violence are true. We have contradictory ideas that are both true. We see Mohammed as a contradictory man because his religious phase can always be used as a pattern of behavior for all Muslims. But then again, his jihad is also a pattern of behavior.

In a system of logic, if two things contradict then at least one of them must be false. But what we have here are two different aspects of a divine being, Allah, both true at the same time.

So in Islam two ideas can contradict each other and yet both can be true. This is dualism and it is one of the two great principles that underlie Islam.

As you study Islam you will discover it always presents two faces. We have, for instance, Mohammed the man married to only one wife and then we have Mohammed married to a large harem. Everything about Islam has two faces, two aspects. This is what makes it so contradictory. This is the reason you keep asking the question, "What is the real Islam? Which of the two contradicting facts is true?"

The point is they are both true and they are true at the same time. This dualism carries over into ethics. Indeed dualism is reflected in the very concept of the Kafir. Since the Koran and Sira and Hadith all treat the Kafir with great cruelty and evil, it means that the Kafir falls under a separate ethical system from Muslims.

The wretched nature of the Kafir means that Islam has two sets of ethics. One set of ethics pertains to the treatment of Kafirs, while the other set of ethics concerns the treatment of Muslims. A Muslim is a brother to another Muslim and that Islamic brotherhood is stronger than blood relations.

There is no Golden Rule in the Koran or the Sira or the Hadith. The Golden Rule is, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Which others? All others. And since we're to treat all others as we would be treated, this means that there is an ethical equivalence, a unitary ethic in which all people are to be treated as part of one humanity. Islam does not have this Golden Rule. Instead it has dualism. We see further manifestations of the dualism of Islamic ethics in *taqiyya*. *Taqiyya* is sacred deception, because Mohammed repeatedly advised Muslims to deceive Kafirs if it would advance Islam.

Dualism is one of the great principles of Islam.

The second great principle is submission. You may have heard that Islam means peace, but that is not true. Islam means submission. The peace comes after you submit to Islam. There is no peace in Islam until you submit to Islam. With submission and dualism, you have the two great principles of Islam.

#### SUMMARY

What have we done here in this opening lecture? What we have shown is that there is a scientific, objective way to study Islam. It does not depend on opinion. It depends on three texts – the Islamic bible, the Trilogy. Everything about Islam is explained by those three texts so there's no need for opinion. There's no need to go and ask someone else. Islam is based on the Sunna of Mohammed, his words and deeds as recorded in the Sira and Hadith. If you know what Mohammed did, if you know his perfect pattern of life, then you don't need to ask a Muslim what a Muslim should do.

It also means that if you're ever discussing Islam, as long as you're basing your points on the example of Mohammed, then you are correct no matter whom you're dealing with, even if it's an Arabic scholar or an imam. Because once you know Mohammed, you know Islam and no one can take that away from you. You have taken your information from the Koran, the Sira, the Hadith and there is no higher authority and there is no deeper knowledge.

The use of fact-based knowledge takes us away from the emotional world and the fear of being called a bigot, the fear of displeasing someone. We go to the realm of the mind and deal with facts. We can deal with the Koran and the Sunna. There's no bigotry in numbers nor is there Islamophobia when you are quoting Mohammed.

When you finish the Foundations training you will be able to reason and argue in a way that goes beyond anything that you've thought possible before. You will become logical and fact-based in your reasoning and will become powerful in persuading others.

# THE SIRA

## LECTURE TWO

Reading the Sira, Mohammed's biography, is the first step towards objective knowledge about Islam. Knowing the Sira moves the discussion away from opinions. It is a foundational approach; you don't need an expert once you know Mohammed, the supreme expert.

We will examine this biography from a point of view that we established in our first lecture. We are going to view Mohammed from the standpoint of the Kafir, the nonbeliever. When you read the Sira it is very much about the world from the standpoint of Islam because every time a Kafir suffers or dies or loses, the Sira is triumphant. The Kafir is evil and his destruction and suffering are good.

The word "sira" means biography in Arabic but the Sira with a capital "S" means the biography of Mohammed. We will view the Sira not from the standpoint of the victor, Mohammed, and Islam, but from the point of view of a Kafir in the days of Mohammed. So this analysis is Kafir-centric.

The analysis we will use is our first step to learning about the Sunna, the words and deeds of Mohammed as recounted in the Sira and Hadith. It's the perfect path, the perfect example of Mohammed, the perfect Muslim. If a Muslim is to copy Mohammed in everything that they do or say then, they need to know what Mohammed did and said. The Sira, his biography, gives us that.

Mohammedanism describes Islam. A Muslim is not someone who worships Allah. A Muslim is one who worships Allah in the exact manner that Mohammed did. This means the exact way, not close, not similar, but 100% like Mohammed.

Since the Koran is incomplete, it turns out that every Muslim's life is based primarily on the perfect example of Mohammed. To understand Mohammed we need to start with the biography. He establishes the pattern of Islam, the direction of Islam, the progression of Islam, because every Muslim is to duplicate him.

When people want to learn about Islam, their first instinct is to try to read the Koran. Most people don't finish reading it and do not understand it. Oddly enough, this confusion frequently passes for profoundness. The right place you want to start to learn Islam is with Mohammed. Once you understand Mohammed, the Koran becomes quite easy to comprehend.

The converse is true as well. If you do not understand Mohammed, you will never understand the Koran.

As a matter of fact, you cannot understand the Koran at all without Mohammed. If you open a scholar's text on the Koran, you will soon discover that Mohammed is what gives the context to all the verses in the Koran. Any comments about the Koran always have to involve Mohammed in some way. If you don't know Mohammed when you try reading the Koran, there's a deep background story that you don't have. You don't have a point of reference. You also don't have any sense of the progression in Islam. How Islam changes is one of the important things you're going to understand by learning about the Sira. You will understand that Islam is a process that starts one way and ends another. It has two distinct phases, but for you to understand those phases, you must understand the life of Mohammed.

The reason we can't understand the Koran that we get in the bookstore is that Mohammed has been removed. When we get to the third of the three books in the *Foundations* course, the Koran, you will see how this works. When you put Mohammed into the Koran it is easy to understand.

The great advantage of a story is that it is very easy to remember. Facts are hard to remember, but you do not forget a story. So the Sira is the easiest part of learning about Islam. It's an amazing story that you will never forget.

The second part of the Trilogy is the Hadith, which is about Mohammed, but there is no time in it, no sense of the chronology of events. It's just a collection of small stories. So there's no time in the Koran, there's no time in the Hadith. The only place there is time is in the Sira.

This training is about the foundations of Islam. We need to know that we study the most foundational biography, the one that cannot be challenged. We will use *The Life of Muhammad*, by Ibn Ishaq, the oldest and most authoritative biography.

Ishaq is the supreme standard for the life of Mohammed. No professor, no imam, no cleric, can give you a deeper and more basic knowledge about Islam and Mohammed than the Sira by Ishaq, the final authority.

Now if you pick up the scholar's version of the Sira by Ishaq, you will find it to be a big, thick book in fine print. It's 800 pages long and it is daunting.

However, all of the work that has been necessary to make the Sira easy to understand has been accomplished in this *Foundations* course. You will need to choose which version of the Sira to use in this course. CSPI has produced two different versions of the Sira. *Mohammed and the Unbelievers*, a

book of about 180 pages, is taken directly from the Sira by Ishaq. You can also read Mohammed's life in a further condensed version titled *The Life of Mohammed* and it's about 80 pages long. Either way you will learn the scope of Islam and you will also understand why knowledge of the Sunna, the words and deeds of Mohammed, is critical.

#### HOW TO READ THE SIRA

When you read the Sira, you need to know that it is much more than a biography. On one level it can be read as one of the great biographies of history. Mohammed goes from being an orphan to the first ruler of all of Arabia. But it is much more than a biography; it is a sacred text, similar to the Gospels of the New Testament.

Below are three of over 90 Koran verses that point to the need to know the Sira:

*Koran 61:10 Believers! Should I show you a profitable exchange that will keep you from severe torment? Believe in Allah and His messenger and fight valiantly for Allah's cause [jihad] with both your wealth and your lives.*

*Koran 58:5 Those who oppose Allah and His Messenger will be laid low, just as those who came before them.*

*Koran 3:31 Say: Obey Allah and His messenger, but if they reject it, then truly, Allah does not love those who reject the faith.*

Mohammed is the ideal pattern for how to live the perfect Islamic life. He is beloved and cannot be criticized. He is perfect in every way. Every Muslim is to repeat his life, down to the smallest detail—how to drink water, how to put on shoes, or even how to use the bathroom. Every Muslim is a Mohammedan.

Mohammed is revered. There are jokes about Jesus, Noah, St. Peter, God, but there are no jokes about Mohammed. He may have laughed at others, but no one had better joke about Mohammed. In present times men have been killed and city blocks destroyed because of a cartoon about Mohammed.

Another way to read the Sira is to see it as a manual of how Islam progressively enters a society. Islam enters a culture as a religion. Everything is fine between Muslims and the new host nation. It comes into a culture at first in a very soft, almost sweet manner, just like any other religion. Indeed, in the very first part of its societal growth, Islam is hardly distinguishable from a religion like Christianity. But as soon as it begins to gather any



strength Islam changes and starts to put pressure on the host culture, to make demands. And these demands against the culture are relentless, ongoing and forever. Islam is always right and the host culture is always completely wrong. Everything about Islam is perfect and everything about the host culture is evil and wrong and must be changed.

Then when Islam gets enough strength, the violence starts. At first the violence is merely in the form of threats. Then the violence is against individuals in the form of assassinations, following the example of Mohammed who frequently executed his intellectual enemies and political and military opponents. Violence is also used to gain money and that money is put towards jihad. It does not stop until the host country is 100% Islamic. To see how this works, look at North Africa, Turkey, Iraq and so on. These areas were once Christian, but today they are 90 - 100% Islamic.

Today, the Kafir nations that border Islam suffer violence. These bloody borders of Islam are a manifestation of Mohammed. He attacked every single neighbor without exception. He made war against pagans, Jews and Christians.

As soon as Mohammed had conquered his nearest neighbors, the Jews and polytheists, he turned north to the Christian world in Syria. If he had lived longer, then the Koran would have been filled with war against the Christian world. As it turned out, the job of crushing the Christians of the Middle East was left to Umar, the second caliph. A caliph is Allah's vice regent on earth and is similar to a pope/political/military leader.

Mohammed was never satisfied as long as there was one person left in his life who was not a Muslim. Every aspect of society had to yield to his will. Islam is never satisfied until the country is 100% Islamic. Ironically, this is carried out at the same time Muslims are declaring that Islam is tolerant towards all religion.

#### THE DIFFICULTY OF THE SIRA

If you pick up the original Sira that was been translated into English, it's about 800 pages in fine print. It is written in difficult academic prose. One paragraph can be a page and a half long. There is one chapter that's nothing but names. There are other chapters which include great lists of names of those who participated in events. And then there is the difficulty of the long Arabic names themselves.

Another difficulty of the book is that when you get through reading it, you discover there's another 100 pages left that are technical details which add to the confusion.

Another surprise to western readers is how much poetry is in this Sira. Indeed, about 25% of the text is poetry. But it's poetry of a most peculiar sort. It's always about "thumping your chest" and insulting your enemies and how you and your allies are powerful, brave heroes. It's war poetry, pure and simple. Here is an example:

*My mother's son blames me because if I were ordered to kill him I  
would strike his neck with a sharp sword.*

*A blade white as salt from polishing.*

*My downward stroke never misses its mark.*

*It would not please me to kill you voluntarily though we owned all of  
Arabia from north to south.*

This type of poetry goes on for page after page. Heroic war poetry taunts the enemy and praises heroes but it does not advance the plot or the story. You learn nothing about Mohammed. The poetry is entertaining perhaps, but it is not informative. The poetry is useful for some advanced scholarship but it is not needed for our purposes of learning the life of Mohammed. Hence, it is edited out.

There's a matter of miracles that are found in the Sira. Now these miracles don't take up much space but they need to be pruned. The Sira reports that one of the taunts of his fellow citizens was that if Mohammed was working for Allah why couldn't he perform a miracle and prove his divine authority. The Sira further records that Mohammed's answer was that he was only a messenger, not a miracle worker. So the Sira both says that Mohammed could not do miracles and it says that he did miracles. The Koran however, is insistent upon the fact that Mohammed was only a messenger, not a miracle worker. We follow the Koran and do not include miracles in the Sira.

Then there are some Arab names that give the English reader some pause because they are very long. If you have a good understanding of Arabic, those names won't slow you down, but for the ordinary English reader it is almost impossible to keep up with the plot.

An Arab name in the Sira is long because it includes his ancestry, his lineage. The cultural barrier is a large one for the first-time reader and so in the Sira that has been prepared for you a one-word name is used. For instance, a person who appears frequently within the Sira is Umar bin Au Katab. We just call him Umar. And if a person does not play a large role, he is named strictly by his function. For instance Abdullah bin Atik is called one of Salam's assassins.

Then there are the 109 pages of technical endnotes. The original text has long since vanished and the man who gave us this copy of Ishaq added his own notes at the end. Again, these are useful to a scholar but they don't advance the plot nor do they give us any needed information about Mohammed. Here's an example, endnote 287:

*Some say that Uamir was the son of Amir or of Zayid.*

Interesting perhaps for a Ph.D. thesis but it does not add to our knowledge of Islam.

So the book that you will be reading has eliminated almost all the poetry and lists of names and simplified the long, Arabic names. And the academic prose has been rewritten into standard, readable English.

In the Sira used in this course, nearly every paragraph starts off with a little number that starts with "I". An example could be I554. The "I" refers to Ishaq and the numbers refer back to the original margin numbers of the ancient text. Here is a sample showing the margin note 554 (which occurs on page 369).

I544 *"The apostle said, 'Kill any Jew that fails into your power'. Thereupon Muhayyisa b. Maus'ud leapt upon Ibn Sunayna, a Jewish merchant with whom they had social and business relations, and killed him. Huwayyisa was not a Muslim at the time though he was the elder brother. When Muhayyisa killed him Huwayyisa began to beat him, saying, 'You enemy of God, did you kill him when much of the fat on your belly comes...'*

As you read the Sira, if you want to verify the text or get the full details, you can refer back to the original text using these reference numbers. This is another reason that this course is powerful.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE SIRA

Mohammed's success depended on politics not religion. And the Sira gives us a highly detailed accounting of his rise to power. He preached the religion of Islam for 13 years in Mecca and garnered 150 followers. But this preaching was filled with condemnation of the Meccans and all of those who disagreed with him. He soon introduced argumentation and fights and divisions within the town of Mecca. He was constantly in everyone's face and was relentless in pushing Islam. He was always right and everyone else was completely wrong. Mohammed showed great fortitude in his purpose and never relented. There were times when he got down and felt depressed but he never quit, never stopped preaching about Allah and his own role as prophet.

It took a long time for the Meccans to get rid of Mohammed and only when his uncle and protector died did he have to leave Mecca. He went to Medina and became a politician and a warrior. In the last nine years of his life he was involved in a violent event on the average of once every six weeks. This violence manifested in many, many ways. There were full military battles and raiding parties on commerce. Mohammed was very big on economic warfare. Wherever possible he hurt his enemies' ability to do business and impoverished them. He robbed the caravans of the Meccans which were their life blood. He enslaved others to gain money for himself. He destroyed vineyards. He cut down and burned date palm plantations. Mohammed's form of war was total war, the black flag.

Mohammed was a businessman and he knew that by hurting his enemy's business he was hurting his enemies. He was shrewd at the art of war. His concept of war went beyond that of anyone who had come before him. Up to his point in history, conquerors merely wanted treasure, but Mohammed wanted his enemy's soul. The process of jihad was not over until his enemy had converted to Islam or lay dead.

Mohammed's concept of war used every aspect human nature. He used persuasion, violence, enslavement, and relentless pressure. He made alliances, divided his enemy's alliances, and used secret agents. His greatest insight into human beings was his concept of the psychology of human fear.

If we look at the two phases of Islam as competing business models, we can see that by employing politics and jihad during his Medina period, he gained about 10,000 new Muslims every year. In Mecca, however, where he had taken a purely proselytizing approach, he gained only about 10 new Muslims a year.

Using the statistics available, we can see that if Mohammed had stayed exclusively in the proselytizing business, there would have only been about 300 Muslims alive when he died, instead of the roughly 100,000 that resulted from jihad and politics. So without jihad and politics, Islam would have never succeeded.

We can see that the relative contribution of religion and politics in this. Mohammed's success was less than 1% religion and more than 99% politics. Jihad is the major theme of the Sira. 81% of the Sira is about the Kafirs and 67% is devoted to jihad. So 67% of the Sira is jihad and 12% of the Sira is devoted to Jewish hatred.

The statistics show that the Sira is a strategic manual of jihad.

You can pick up many biographies about Mohammed, but most are not based on the Sira. For instance, there is a popular biography of Mohammed

by Karen Armstrong, used in some universities. However, her biography of Mohammed is propaganda for Islam. How do we know this? By reading the original Sira we find out how much violence was in it but when we read Karen Armstrong or for that matter, almost any other biographer of Mohammed, we don't find torture, we don't find rape, enslavement and Jewish hatred. No. We find a sweet Mohammed, one who was affectionate. We get his picture as a father and as a husband and it's a romantic view. Inside Karen Armstrong's biography and all of the others like hers we don't have a woman put in between camels and pulled apart. We don't have her daughter passed around as a sex slave for Mohammed's jihad lieutenants. We don't see any of this ugly side of Mohammed. So most of the biographies of Mohammed are romances. That is the beauty of going back to the original source, to the original Sira. We discover the true nature of Mohammed.

#### ANNIHILATION

The other thing we find out from the Sira is Islam's neighbor policy. In the Sira, Mohammed attacked every neighbor. He first attacked the Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula, then the Jews and then when he had conquered all of them he turned his eyes to the north to Syria, to the Christian world. In his last days he started lashing out and attacking the Christians of the north. Why? Simple. They were Kafirs who were wealthy and had territory and Mohammed wanted it. The Sira shows us that Mohammed was never satisfied. He was not even satisfied with a majority. One of his great insights was never to accept less than 100%. Not even 99% was good enough for Mohammed. Everyone, and that means every single person, had to do everything Mohammed's way. They had to worship his way, they had to do politics his way, and their sex, food, the naming of children had to be just like Mohammed's way. He was right about everything. Even the use of the toilet must be in the manner of Mohammed. Mohammed invented civilizational war, a war designed to annihilate the host civilization down to the last fine detail. Every civilization had to become fully Islamicized.

We see this in the growth of Islam politically. Once Islam enters a society its growth never stops until it gets to 100%. For instance, Turkey used to be Christian. At this time Turkey is 99.7% Muslim. But that is not enough; the pressure on the Christians in Turkey will not stop until the last Christian leaves the country or converts. It is ever thus. Iraq used to be a Christian nation, but the last bit of Christianity there will soon be annihilated. Islam will never be satisfied until the last Christian is gone from Iraq.

Part of the rise of Islam is the destruction of religious art. In our time the Bamyán Buddhas of Afghanistan were destroyed by the Taliban by the use of artillery. Why did they do this? When Mohammed entered Mecca as its conqueror, what did he do? He annihilated all religious art. All the cultural aspects of a society have to be eliminated under the jihad of civilizational war. Mohammed's tactics lead us to the Tears of Jihad, a relentless 1400 year record in which 60 million Christians, 80 million Hindus, 10 million Buddhists and 120 million Africans have been destroyed. The Sira lays out how all of this is to be done and as it was then, it is now. There is no reason for Islam to change at all. For all the talk of reform from the standpoint of Islam, why would you possibly want to abandon a program that works? For 1400 years the religion and politics and jihad of Islam have annihilated all Kafirs. There is no reason for this to change. The lesson of the Sira is that jihad always works.

#### THE PLOT OF THE SIRA

The plot of Mohammed, the plot of the Sira, can be understood this way. Imagine that we took the Sira, the life of Mohammed, and we made it into a two hour movie. If we did that we would find that the first three minutes of the movie was quite peaceful. We would then have 36 minutes of arguing and fights and then there would be 84 minutes of war, rage, enslavement, a war against all Kafir society.

At the very beginning of the Sira, long before Mohammed's birth, we get a history of Mohammed's tribe, the background to Mohammed's birth. Now the Sira reports that there were many miraculous events surrounding his birth. He had a perfect lineage that went all the way back to Adam.

We also learn that Mecca was a pilgrimage city and a center of religion. Mohammed's family and tribe were involved in the business of religion since Mecca was a pilgrimage site. There was money to be made because there were services to be performed and goods that the pilgrims needed to buy. So for a long time before Mohammed, Mecca was a religious center and his clan or tribe was involved in the business of religion.

Mohammed was orphaned at three different times. His mother died soon after his birth, and then his father died and then his adoptive uncle also died.

When he was in his early twenties, Mohammed became a foreman of a caravan that traded between Syria and Mecca which was owned by a woman named Khadija. Khadija, a widow, asked Mohammed to be her husband and he accepted. Khadija was older, but the marriage seemed to be happy and they had children.

Then in his early forties Mohammed started having visions and hearing words. He called these experiences “revelations,” and claimed that an angel was giving him the direct words of the only god of the universe. At first, worrying that he might be crazy, Mohammed was quite shy about this information and only told his own family. However, he continued to receive revelations and gradually expanded his sphere of influence by telling more people.

Finally, he took his message to the Meccan community. Initially, they received him quite well. After all, Mecca was in the business of religion. People in Arabia were polytheist and polytheists are, by definition, quite tolerant, because they’re used to the idea of many gods.

But then Mohammed became more and more argumentative. He condemned the Meccans’ parents to hell. He insisted that not only was he right but all other religions were wrong, causing dissension. Then Mohammed said that the Meccans’ ancestors who had died before Mohammed’s revelations were now burning in hell.

Since the Arabs were very much oriented towards their ancestors, this caused a lot of ill will about Mohammed, who was very insistent. He pressed his case every day at the Kabbah, which was a religious and community center. He became more and more querulous and unpleasant.

After 13 years in Mecca, he had only 150 followers. When his uncle and protector died, Mohammed was asked to take his followers and leave. He then journeyed to Medina where half the population was Jewish. There had been no Jews in Mecca who knew how to contradict Mohammed’s revelations from his archangel about the true story of Abraham, Adam, Isaac, Moses, and Noah. According to Mohammed’s revelation, the Jewish scriptures were corrupted.

When Mohammed got to Medina, the rabbis told Mohammed that he was not a prophet. Mohammed was not easily crossed on the subject of religion and three years later the Jews of Medina were annihilated.

Mohammed was now in the midst of jihad and was quite successful in every way. His men prospered as more and more people joined Islam. Mohammed became more violent and for the last nine years of his life, he was involved in a violent incident an average of once every six weeks. By the time he died, every Arab was a Muslim and Mohammed did not have any enemies left alive.

The plot of the Sira is exciting and you have only heard the highlights. There are spies, secret agents, bribes. There are many things in the story of Mohammed and the Sira that would make an incredible movie.